

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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R 071514Z JAN 76

FM AMCONSUL STUTTGART

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2740

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

USMISSION USBERLIN

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUESSELDORF

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

HQ USEUCOM

HQ USAREUR

UNCLAS STUTTGART 017

FOR POLADS

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT GW

SUBJ: GENSCHE AND FDP OPEN ELECTION YEAR IN STUTTGART

REF: 75 STUTTGART 1215

1. SUMMARY: FOREIGN MINISTER AND FDP FEDERAL CHAIRMAN GENSCHE'S STUTTGART SPEECH HIGHLIGHTED BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG FDP'S TRADITIONAL EPHPHANY MEETING AND FOCUSED ON 1976 LANDTAG AND BUNDESTAG ELECTIONS. WHILE STRESSING INDEPENDENT ROLE OF FDP COMPARED TO OTHER PARTIES AND PLACING IT FIRMLY IN CENTER OF POLITICAL SPECTRUM, GENSCHE DIRECTED MOST OF CRITICISM AT CDU/CSU. FDP SEEKS INCREASED MEMBERS IN BUNDESTAG TO STRENGTHEN BARGAINING POSITION IN COALITION GOVERNMENT AND SEEMS TO BE COUNTING ON BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG LANDTAG ELECTION GAINS AS ESSEN-  
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TIAL TO SUCCESS IN NATIONAL ELECTIONS. DOMESTIC ECONOMIC ISSUES

OVERSHADOW FOREIGN POLICY QUESTIONS. BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG FDP CHAIRMAN BANGEMANN PRESIDES WITHOUT SERIOUS CHALLENGE OVER RELATIVELY UNEVENTFUL LAND ASPECTS OF MEETING. END SUMMARY.

2. TRADITIONAL EPIPHANY MEETING OF BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG FDP RELATIVELY UNEVENTFUL EXCEPT FOR JANUARY 6 STUTTGART SPEECH OF FOREIGN MINISTER AND FDP FEDERAL CHAIRMAN HANS DIETRICH GENSCHER. HE STRESSED ROLE OF AN INDEPENDENT FDP IN CENTER OF PARTY POLITICAL SPECTRUM AND AS A RELIABLE GOVERNMENT PARTNER WHICH IS THE ESSENCE OF DEMOCRATIC COALITION POLITICS. HE ALSO ADDED THAT ALL MAJOR PARTIES WERE CAPABLE OF GOVERNING.

3. WHILE DIRECTING MILD CRITICISM AT SPD, GENSCHER WEIGHED IN HEAVILY AGAINST CDU/CSU. HE BLASTED NEGATIVISTIC CDU/CSU POSITIONS ON FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES WHICH, IF AFOLOWED, WOULD HAVE LEFT FRG ISOLATED FROM ITS ALLIES, WHETHER THIS BE ON DETENTE, FINANCIAL, OR NORTH-SOUTH ISSUES. GENSCHER LEFT NO DOUBT THAT WHILE FDP WOULD CAMPAIGN INDEPENDENTLY, CDU/CSU WOULD BE MAIN TARGET IN BOTH APRIL 4 BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG LANDTAG AND OCTOBER 3 BUNDESTAG ELECTIONS. IN THIS REGARD HE ATTACKED BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG CDU AS "PROVINCIAL CONSERVATIVES" MASQUERADING AS LIBERALS, REINFORCING CERTAIN OTHER INDICATIONS WE HAVE RECEIVED THAT FILBINGER, WHO HOLDS THE REIGNS TIGHTLY IN THE CDU CAMPAIGN, WILL BE PRINCIPAL TARGET OF FDP AND SPD POLITICIANS. GENSCHER ALSO MADE CLEAR HIS VIEW THAT ONLY THE FDP AND NOT THE SPD COULD BREAK THE CDU MAJORITY IN BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG.

4. GENSCHER PRAISED FDP ACCOMPLISHMENTS IN PAST YEAR AND SAID MAIN QUESTION NOW WAS WHAT INFLUENCE FDP WOULD HAVE IN NEXT FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. HE NOTED FDP'S 1975 ELECTORAL SUCCESSES WHICH HAD EARNED THE PARTY REPRESENTATION IN ALL FRG LANDTAGS FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE 1966 AND HOPED FDP SUCCESS IN BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG WOULD HELP MAINTAIN THE MOMENTUM FOR THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS.

5. GENSCHER STRESSED IMPORTANCE OF THE ECONOMY AS MAJOR ISSUE IN NATIONAL CAMPAIGN. HE WAS OPTIMISTIC AND STATE OF THE ECONOMY WOULD BE IMPROVING AND RESTATED KNOWN FDP VIEWS ON A NUMBER OF ISSUES. ON FOREIGN POLICY HE SAID NEXT TO NOTHING ON UNCLASSIFIED

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THE ROLE OF THE US. INSTEAD HE STRESSED THE FDP'S EUROPEAN ACTIVITIES AND ADDED THAT EUROPEAN LIBERALS IN MARCH WOULD BE FOUNDING A EUROPEAN LIBERAL PARTY IN STUTTGART, APPROPRIATELY ENOUGH.

6. BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG ASPECTS OF MEETING GENERATED LITTLE ENTHUSIASM AND EVEN LESS CONTROVERSY. EPIPHANY MEETING ALMOST ANTI-CLIMACTIC AFTER QUESTION OF LAND CHAIRMAN BANGEMANN'S

IMMEDIATE FUTURE AND BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG FDP POSITION ON COALITION POSSIBILITIES SETTLED AT NOVEMBER 8 MEETING IN KONSTANZ (REFTEL). CLOUS HANGING OVER BANGEMANN SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN DISSIPATED FOR TIME BEING.

7. COMMENT: GENSCHER SEEMED TO BE PUTTING FDP IN DIRECT COMPETITION WITH THE SPD AND CDU/CSU IN THE GREAT GRAB FOR THE MIDDLE TO ATTRACT THE SWING, INDEPENDENT, OR UNDECIDED VOTERS. JUDGING FROM HIS ENTHUSIASTIC AND SOMETIMES EMOTIONAL SPEECH, GENSCHER MAY HAVE BEEN TRYING TO CONVINCE PEOPLE THAT THE FDP COULD AND/OR WOULD FIGHT HARDER THAN MANY PEOPLE THOUGHT. SIGNALING THE NATIONAL IMPORTANCE OF THE BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG LANDTAG ELECTIONS, GENSCHER HAD ALMOST THE ENTIRE FDP NATIONAL LEADERSHIP (DEPUTY FDP CHAIRMAN, HAMM-BRUECHER, INTERIOR MINISTER MAIHOFFER, ECONOMICS MINISTER FRIEDERICH, AND BUNDESTAG FACTION LEADER MISCHNICK) IN TOW TO TAKE BOWS IN STUTTGART. DESPITE GENSCHER'S RINGING DECLARATIONS, SOME RESERVATIONS ARE ALREADY BEING EXPRESSED LOCALLY THAT THE FDP IS NOT SUCCEEDING IN PRESENTING ITSELF TO THE VOTING PUBLIC AS A REAL ALTERNATIVE TO THE SPD OR CDU/CSU. REGARDLESS OF WHETHER OR NOT THE FDP SUCCEEDS IN SELLING ITSELF, THERE IS REASONABLE OPTIMISM THAT ON APRIL 4 IT CAN BETTER THE 8.9 PERCENT OF THE VOTE IT RECEIVED IN THE 1972 LANDTAG ELECTIONS. SOME PRESS AND POLITICAL CONTACTS SPECULATE THAT THE BADEN-WUERTTEMBERG FDP MIGHT WIN AS MUCH AS 12 PERCENT. JENKINS

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